

THE IOWA POLL

Study #2040
800 Iowa adults
Margin of error: ± 3.5 percentage points

SELZER & COMPANY
February 12-15, 2012
Weighted by age and sex

In general, do you think things in the nation are headed in the right direction, or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

Right direction	Wrong track	Not sure
30	64	6

I'm going to mention some major political figures. For each, please tell me if your feelings are very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable. If you don't know enough to answer, just say so. **(Record "don't know" as "not sure." Rotate list.)**

	<u>Very Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Unfavorable</u>	<u>Very Unfavorable</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Barack Obama, president of the United States	19	27	20	31	3
Mitt Romney, former governor of Massachusetts and candidate for the Republican nomination	7	32	28	23	10
Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and candidate for the Republican nomination	4	20	30	35	11
Rick Santorum, former U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania and candidate for the Republican nomination	18	30	17	16	19
Ron Paul, congressman from Texas and candidate for the Republican nomination	12	30	27	14	17

How likely is it you will vote in the November general election for president and other offices—will you definitely vote, probably vote, might or might not vote, or probably not vote?

Definitely vote	Probably vote	Might or might not vote	Probably not vote	Refused/ Not sure
76	13	5	6	-

If the election for president were held today, and the candidates were Barack Obama for the Democrats and [NAME FROM LIST] for the Republicans, for whom would you vote? **(Asked only of likely voters in the November 2012 election; n=611. Margin of error: ± 4.0 percentage points on these questions. Repeat question and rotate list.)**

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Other/would <u>not</u> vote</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Mitt Romney	46	44	6	4
Newt Gingrich	37	51	8	4
Rick Santorum	48	44	3	5
Ron Paul	49	42	5	4

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?

(Follow with:) Do you approve or disapprove of the job he is doing: **(Rotate B through F.)**

	Approve	Disapprove	Not Sure
His job as president	46	48	6
With the economy	38	58	4
With health care	36	58	6
With relations with other countries	52	41	7
With the budget deficit	33	61	6
With his handling of the war in Afghanistan	56	36	8

I'd like to turn to some issues under consideration by the Iowa Legislature. A trade-off the Legislature is considering is about tax rates on commercial property. Reduced rates might make Iowa more attractive to business, and would also mean lower tax revenues for cities, counties and schools. Do you favor or oppose this approach?

Favor	Oppose	Not sure
60	28	12

If the Iowa Legislature were to decide to reduce commercial property tax rates, should it target more benefit to small businesses, or reduce the rate by the same percentage for all businesses, regardless of size?

- 43** Target more benefit to small businesses
- 48** Reduce the rate by the same percentage for all businesses
- 9** Not sure

Do you think reducing commercial property tax rates would or would not attract more businesses to Iowa and motivate existing businesses to add jobs here?

- 73** Would attract and motivate
- 16** Would not attract or motivate
- 11** Not sure

If the Iowa Legislature is going to reduce taxes in some way, which of the following taxes should get the highest priority? **(Read list. Rotate.)**

- 12** Commercial property taxes paid by businesses that own property in Iowa
- 13** Income taxes paid by corporations with earnings from businesses in Iowa
- 23** Residential property taxes paid by homeowners and landlords
- 32** Iowa personal income taxes paid by all Iowans with a certain amount of taxable income
- 10** State sales tax paid on non-food items purchased at Iowa stores
- Some other tax (specify:)
- 10** Not sure

Turning now to public education policy, I'm going to mention some changes the Iowa Legislature is considering as part of an effort to overhaul public education in Iowa. For each, please tell me if you think this would make a major difference in raising the quality of education students receive, a minor difference, or no real difference. **(Rotate list.)**

Ranked by Major difference	<u>Major difference</u>	<u>Minor difference</u>	<u>No real difference</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Evaluate every classroom teacher annually	61	26	11	2
Hold back third-graders until they can pass a reading test or show proficiency at that grade level	56	26	16	2
Require high school students to take end-of-course exams	53	32	14	1
Require prospective teachers to have a 3.0 grade point average and pass a basic skills test to enter college teacher preparation programs	49	31	18	2
Increase teacher pay across the board	45	31	23	1
Increase teacher pay tied to improvement in student achievement	43	33	21	3
Create more charter schools, which would allow these schools to make their own decisions about how to best teach students without as many regulations as other schools	36	35	23	6
Extend the school year beyond the current 180 day requirement	28	36	34	2
Lengthen the school day to increase instructional time	22	40	36	2

I have a couple of questions about testing students. For each, please tell me if you think it is generally a good or bad idea.

	<u>Good Idea</u>	<u>Bad Idea</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Require all 11th grade students to take a college entrance exam	66	31	3
Every three years, require a sample of 15-year-olds to take a test that compares them with their peers in other countries	67	30	3

Governor Branstad has laid out three major areas he wants the state legislature to address this session. Which one do you think should be the top priority? **(Read list. Rotate, though "Or is something else more important?" must always be last.)**

- 16** Reducing property taxes on commercial and industrial properties
- 18** Making mental health services more consistent statewide
- 56** Improving the quality of public education
- 6** Or is something else more important? **(Specify)**
- 4** Not sure

Here are some issues that may be debated in the Iowa Legislature this year. For each, please tell me if you favor or oppose the initiative. (Rotate list, but traffic enforcement cameras must always follow red-light cameras.)

Ranked by favor	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
Spend an additional \$25 million a year in business incentives in an effort to create more jobs in Iowa	64	31	5
Change the law to ban most abortions after five months of gestation, instead of after six months as the law currently allows	54	38	8
Require public employees to pay \$200 a month toward their health insurance premium	52	41	7
Ban traffic-enforcement cameras that take pictures of speeders	51	47	2
Ban red-light cameras	50	46	4
Reduce commercial property tax rates by 40% over eight years	49	42	9
Outlaw lead shot for hunting mourning doves	45	41	14
Raise the gas tax 8 to 10 cents a gallon to pay for road and bridge repairs	31	68	1
Legalize internet gambling for adults	28	69	3
Eliminate all tax credits to businesses	21	71	8
Set rules allowing a utility to charge its customers up front for the costs to plan and build a nuclear power plant	18	77	5

In politics as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

- 29** Republican
- 26** Democrat
- 41** Independent
- 1** Other (VOL)
- 3** Refused/not sure

Which of the following best describes your religious beliefs—Roman Catholic, Protestant, some other kind of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, other, or none?

- 21** Roman Catholic
- 37** Protestant
- 24** Some other kind of Christian
 - Jewish
 - Muslim
- 1** Other
- 14** None
- 3** Refused/not sure

Would you describe yourself as a "born again" or evangelical Christian, or not?

- 31** Yes
- 63** No
- 6** Not sure

About the poll

The Iowa Poll, conducted Feb. 12-15 for The Des Moines Register by Selzer & Co. of Des Moines, is based on interviews with 800 Iowans ages 18 or older. Interviewers contacted households with randomly selected landline and cell phone numbers. Percentages based on the full sample may have a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Responses were weighted by age and sex to reflect the general population based on recent census data. Results based on smaller samples of respondents—such as by gender or age—have a larger margin of error. For responses based on the 611 likely voters in the November 2012 general election, the margin of error is plus or minus 4.0 percentage points. Republishing the copyright Iowa Poll without credit to The Des Moines Register is prohibited.